

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-07 L-02

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FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1899

INFO AMCONSUL OPORTO

AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA

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PASS AGRICULTURE

EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, EAGR, PO

SUBJ: COMMUNIST PARTY AGRARIAN PROGRAM

REF: LISBON 981

1. SUMMARY: PORTUGUESE COMMUNIST PARTY (PCP) IS DISSEMINATING ITS PROGRAM ON AGRICULTURAL PROBLEMS AND "AGRARIAN REFORM." POINTS HIGHLIGHTED ARE BEING DISCUSSED IN VARIOUS PDP-SPONSORED MEETINGS THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY. END SUMMARY.

2. PCP STATES TWO FACTORS WILL LEAD TO IMMEDIATE INCREASE IN AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION:

(A) STATE REQUISITION OF UNCULTIVATED LAND AND ITS DEVELOPMENT THROUGH PUBLIC MANAGEMENT, COOPERATIVES, OR FAMILY OPERATIONS.

(B) DISTRIBUTION OF IDLE LAND TO THE PEOPLE WHO WILL DECIDE HOW BEST TO UTILIZE IT, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE PROTECTION OF FOREST

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AREAS.

3. THE PCP CONSIDERS PRINCIPAL PROBLEMS AFFECTING PORTUGUESE AGRICULTURE TO BE THE FOLLOWING:

(A) ITS STRUCTURE (LARGE ESTATES AND DISTRIBUTION OF THE RURAL POPULATION).

(B) BACKWARD TECHNIQUES.

(C) RELATIONS BETWEEN DIFFERENT TYPES OF AGRICULTURAL PRODUCERS AS WELL AS THEIR LINKS WITH CREDIT, INDUSTRY AND TRADE.

4. AGRARIAN REFORM: PCP FEELS THAT PART OF LAND OWNED BY LARGE LANDOWNERS SHOULD BE DISTRIBUTED AMONG THOSE WHO ARE PREPARED TO FARM IT. ESTABLISHMENT OF RURAL WORKER UNIONS AND "LEAGUES OF SMALL FARMERS" IS A STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION.

5. THE PCP ENUMERATES 10 MAJOR OBJECTIVES FOR AGRARIAN REFORM:

(A) EXPROPRIATION OF LARGE ESTATES ON THE BASIS OF CERTAIN CONDITIONS (SIZE, CROP SUITABILITY, ETC.) FOR TURNOVER TO RURAL WORKERS AND POOR FARMERS.

(B) IN CERTAIN CASES LAND TO BE DEVELOPED INDIVIDUALLY OR BY MEANS OF COOPERATIVES; IN OTHER CASES TO BE DEVELOPED BY THE STATE.

(C) INCREASE RURAL LABOR WAGES, GUARANTEE EMPLOYMENT AND 8-HOUR WORKING DAY.

(D) ABOLISH "SEMI-FEUDAL" TYPE OF FARM OPERATION. FULL OWNERSHIP OF LAND TO THOSE WHO FARM IT. CHANGE LEASE LAWS.

(E) RESTITUTION OF IDLE LAND OR LAND OWNED BY THE FORMER GOVERNMENT TO THE PEOPLE.

(F) GOVERNMENT AID TO THE SMALL FARMER; ENCOURAGING OF COOPERATIVES; AGRICULTURAL CREDIT FACILITIES AT LOW INTEREST RATES; TECHNICAL AID AND ESTABLISHMENT OF AGRICULTURAL-BASED INDUSTRIAL UNITS.

(G) RURAL ELECTRIFICATION; BUILDING OF ROADS AND SCHOOLS, WATER-SUPPLY, AND MEDICAL AID UNITS.

(H) DEVELOP CHEMICAL FERTILIZER AND FARM EQUIPMENT INDUSTRIES; INCREASE FARM IRRIGATION AND ELECTRIFICATION; LIVESTOCK IMPROVEMENT; FORESTATION; IMPROVE TRANSPORT AND STORAGE CAPACITIES OF WINE STORAGE AND OLIVE PRESSING UNITS.

(I) ABOLISH SPECULATION AND PARASITIC MIDDLEMEN AND MONOPOLIST BUYERS. ABOLISH GUILDS, FEDERATIONS AND BOARDS. REORGANIZE TRADE PRACTICES.

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(J) PROGRESSIVE TAX SYSTEM. "HIGHER TAXES FOR LARGER INCOMES."

6. COMMENT: COMMUNIST AGRARIAN PROGRAM FITS INTO PARTY'S CURRENT LOW-PROFILE STRATEGY. PROGRAM IS DESIGNED TO LOOK REFORMIST, NOT ALARMIST. HENCE, IT DOES NOT CALL FOR RADICAL CHANGES IN SYSTEM OF LAND TENURE: PRINCIPLE OF PRIVATE OWNERSHIP, FOR EXAMPLE, IS NOT QUESTIONED. PCP PROGRAM IS GOOD CAMPAIGN MATERIAL FOR THE ALENTEJO AREA IN SOUTHERN PORTUGAL, WITH ITS EXTENSIVE AGRICULTURE, RURAL UNEMPLOYMENT, AND ABSENTEE LANDOWNERS. THE PCP IS GENERALLY CONCEDED TO BE STRONG IN THIS AREA AND ITS PROGRAM PROBABLY WILL EVOKE A SYMPATHETIC RESPONSE AMONG

THE VOTERS.

7. THE PCP PROGRAM WILL BE LESS ATTRACTIVE FOR NORTHERN FARMERS WHERE THE PATTERN OF AGRICULTURE IS OF PRIVATELY-OWNED MINIFUNDIA. THE PCP IS IN ANY CASE MUCH WEAKER IN THE RURAL NORTH. IT IS PROBABLY PREPARED TO CONSOLIDATE ITS POSITION IN THE SOUTH RATHER THAN ATTEMPT TO DESIGN A PROGRAM WHICH WOULD APPEAL EQUALLY TO THE CONFLICTING INTERESTS OF THE TWO REGIONS.

8. IN SPITE OF ITS REGIONAL BIAS THE PCP PROPOSALS ARE DESIGNED TO INCLUDE POINTS HAVING APPEAL TO ALL SECTORS. MANY OF THE PROPOSALS ARE INCORPORATED, IN ONE FORM OR ANOTHER, IN THE AGRICULTURAL SECTION OF THE GOVERNMENT'S ECONOMIC PROGRAM PUBLISHED FEBRUARY 21 (REFTEL).  
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